I know you aren't interested in seeing any, but I want to explain what I meant earlier.

In general, if something's classed under "horror", it's usually pathetic in every sense and is not worth seeing. I hate the ones like The Exorcist, The Evil Dead, Halloween, and Saw. In the 1970s and 1980s, while there were a lot of those typical sorts, there were also many which didn't appropriately fit into the genre.

I was fumbling in describing them earlier because I was trying to merge distinct aspects from separate ones. It would be easier to explain what I mean by copying & pasting reviews I found yesterday from several examples of different ones, although they don't encompass everything I like.

Willard:

If you're expecting this to be a horror film, you'll be disappointed. Yes, it does have its scary moments, but plays better as a psychological drama than straight horror. The pace is glacial, but the performances are top-notch

"Willard" is not a scary or gory film, but it does feature some admirably atmospheric sequences, dark & grim set pieces and a masterfully tense climax. The hectically crawling rats are eerie to behold, but still the film primarily relies on good old-fashioned human acting performances.

Messiah of Evil:

I was totally knocked-out by this forgotten film. Everything about it is mesmerizing. The thing I was impressed the most about Messiah of Evil is the mood. I've rarely seen a horror this darkly moody. Horror fans looking for gore or fast paced action or even the standard way horror films are usually made (high body count, an unstoppable killer, etc) will be disappointed by this. It's none of those things. Messiah of Evil is directed like a nightmare and everything about it is disorienting. There's almost no familiar point of reference in the movie. Everything about it is deliberately done as to make the viewers feel like they cannot relate to what's going on, which is probably why this film looks like a failure to many. But for me, the effect is fantastic.

Messiah Of Evil is one of those strange films that really does not fit into any genre.

This movie is filled to the brim with creepy atmosphere, chilling scenes, very strange and memorable characters, and plenty of genuine w.t.f. moments. Watching this film it, at times, felt like it was shot in another dimension. A world of its own creation.

Driller Killer: (This is a single one)

"The Driller Killer" is not much of a horror film. Whatever it is, it's darn good. It is a film that should be watched alone, and it is a film worth taking seriously as a work of art. It clearly has its flaws, so I can't give it more than an 8. But what it does have to offer is so rare that you should make a point to see it.

A long time ago I heard someone describe slam poetry as being "style over substance." This phrase stuck with me, and regardless of whether you care about slam poetry, it's easy see the value of applying such a distinction to any form of art. Not that there is anything wrong with aesthetics for their own sake. True horror movies are, arguably, nothing but a refined aesthetic.

But there's something that's always bothered me about art that CONFLATES style with substance. Gritty "art" films are case in point. I'm sure you can think of a handful of artsy films using a grainy look and tragic plot points, such as suicide or cancer or AIDS or marital infidelity, to mask naive, meaningless stories. Audiences emerge from such films believing they've learned something or that, at the very least, the film took a "deep" look at things.

I have gone on this tedious tirade because I cannot think of a more concise way to explain what's so darn good about Driller Killer than this: Driller Killer has substance. And that means a lot.

Allow me to make a case for this. First I must admit its faults. For one, it doesn't really live up to its promise from an aesthetic perspective. None of the dozen or so "drill kills" are as convincing as the single zombie drill kill in "Day of the Dead," and many of kills are quite dry. Secondly, there's something ambiguously awkward about the film. The emotional monologues are occasionally laughable inept and the very fact that the film has depth makes its imperfections all the more vulnerable. There's something whiny about the main character, for example, that makes you want to just smack him sometimes, and tell him to pull himself together. Third, it really does borrow some things from Taxi Driver, though I will argue that the similarities are mostly superficial.

And now, the good things.

Driller Killer is, in a substantial sense, gritty. The human condition is portrayed as uniformly and profoundly pathetic. Not in a terrible-things-happen-to-decent-people way, as in the above examples of AIDS/cancer. Nor does it portray world as being full of secretly and deeply unhappy people, as in the marital infidelity/suicide examples above. Indeed, some of the characters appear to be quite satisfied with their lives, and yet in the world of Driller Killer, the viewer feels that they are simply oblivious to the emptiness of their lives. Not the sort of characters that you would expect, either.

Actually, the portrayal of the punk rock band is one of the things that impressed me the most. I think many reviewers missed the point on this one. With their role in the story, Ferrara himself seems to be making a statement about style vs. substance, with the punk rock band members representing enviable stylishness and alpha-maleness and yet being as inconsequential as anyone else. His portrayal of them is dead on, as far as mimicking the romanticized aesthetic of punk rock. The band, called "The Roosters," appears glamorous, dirty, sexy, wild, rebellious, cool, driven, tough, fearless, etc. Yet Ferrara wants us to see that, even though these kids are quite happy with themselves and are seemingly living the high life, he sees their lives as being as pathetically hollow as the homeless guys.

You might expect from the plot outline a story that starts out with the character having a rough time, until two-thirds through the movie when he snaps and goes on a vindictive murderous rampage a la Taxi Driver. This is not, however, a story of an underdog avenger, but as someone fighting a losing battle against existential triviality. He develops a sort of compulsive coping mechanism (murder, of course) to deal with a world that overwhelms him. There's something oddly casual about the way the killings fit into the story.

In addition to being unique, what's really cool about this sort of killer is that it doesn't shelve the responsibility for human aggression on someone/something else. It's not multiple personality disorder, it's not bullies-made-him-do-it: it's a mostly-sane man's reaction to day-to-day life.

The last thing I want to comment on is the unusual structure of the film. It kind of feels like an arbitrary stretch of flat, country road. There are no twists or turns. There aren't even any sudden shifts in tone. The name, "Driller Killer," is some evidence that this predictability is intentional. We aren't supposed to be surprised or shocked by anything, and we can always see where the film is going. We can even take a look behind us and guess what happened before the film started, and look ahead past the credits to know pretty much what's going to happen in our driller killer's life after the story ends. Yet, I have no trouble picking out the exposition, the rising action, the climax, the falling action, the resolution. Somehow it just all happens with a resigned, tired sort of inevitability. The linearity/inevitability compliments the themes and substance of the film and is not just an aesthetic choice.

Let's Scare Jessica To Death:

It's a somewhat slow paced, though engaging movie that frequently relies on atmosphere rather than action to set the horror environment, and the result is sublime. I highly recommend it, especially if you prefer horror films that are atmospheric rather than bloodbaths.

This film has such a subtle disturbing atmosphere that it can be taken as boring if one is looking for the opposite in horror films. There is never a real startling shock experience in the entire film, however there is a slow, continuous pull towards confusion and distraught. The characters are not complex, with the exception of Jessica and this is what makes this film a real sleeper in horror. When one watches this film with no expectations or comparisons in mind, it takes little time to realize there is something more here with the story, something that computer generated effects, or cheap gore cannot accomplish. With the brilliant simplistic score and unpretentious mood, it is impossible to not have some emotion after watching this classic horror film.

The film's bizarre events make things all the more unsettling, and the movie leaves you with a strange, somewhat vile feeling. It's not gory at all, but the entire plot, the atmosphere, the music - it just evokes a sense of pure dread and claustrophobia. There's just some unexplainable quality about this film that makes you feel uncomfortable and strange. This movie doesn't need loads of violence, because it's spooky enough on it's own. Even in the film's conclusion, many questions are left unanswered. But this unresolved ending complies with the whole tone of the film and the mystery of it all. Overall, "Let's Scare Jessica To Death" is an undiscovered, dreamlike little horror film. It's surreal and foreboding atmosphere make this unbelievably eerie in itself, but the strange things taking place add to it's spookiness, and there are some images displayed in the film that are really hard to forget. Strongly recommended to those who are fans of '70s horror, it may be a little too slow for modern movie-goers, but it is a rewarding movie in the end. The entire vibe the film gives off is unpleasant and unsettling, but that's why I find it so effective. Quite possibly one of the spookiest films I've ever seen.

Let's Scare Jessica to Death is a leading exemplar of understated, low-budget horror from the 1970s. Gritty, brooding, atmospheric, and cerebral, the film's true assets are its earnest performances, isolated farmhouse location, and unsettling, eclectic score composed by Orville Stoeber. They just don't make 'em like this anymore. The film succeeds because it uproots the viewer's sense of a conventional narrative. By forcing us to see things through the eyes of the disturbed Jessica (played fantastically by sweet-faced Lampert with just the right amount of poignancy and tragic mental instability), we aren't given an objective viewpoint. Thus, security is thrown out the window and a general uneasiness runs rampant throughout. The rug is all but completely pulled out from under us by the time the credits roll. Are the things we see through Jessica's perspective even happening at all? Let's Scare Jessica to Death is likely too ponderous and subtle for today's horror audiences. It substitutes action and gore with style and mood. However, the film is a must-see for anyone with an interest in '70s film.

For the most part, Let's Scare Jessica to Death works as a slow-moving, atmospheric horror film. If you

need chainsaws rumbling, masked killers, and blood spurting, steer clear of this one. But if you're a fan of slow-burn, subtle horror, you will find a lot to enjoy.